Organized by the
WMU Campus-Wide Suicide Prevention Program
Workshop Agenda

1. Connectedness in the New Millennium
2. The Connection Profiles
   *Short Break, Lunch, and Book Raffle*
3. Building Connections on Campus
4. Performance: WMU Theater for Community Health
5. Suicide Prevention Program Updates
6. Awards and Closing Remarks
CONNECTEDNESS?
Connectedness

**Definition**

- A psychological state of belonging in which individuals perceive that they are valued, cared for, trusted, and respected by the individuals and communities with whom they are in regular contact.

**Core Components**

1. A psychological state
2. Reciprocal
3. Setting-specific, interactive, and cumulative
4. Interpersonal and intrapersonal influence
Handouts
“My Connections”
&
“My Connection Strategies”
Connectedness and Mental Health

Connectedness has been found to be a protective factor against depression and suicide.

Connectedness has also been found to be a protective factor against the following: poor body image, emotional stress, substance abuse, academic problems, and violence.

Lack of connectedness has been associated with increased risk for developing psychological disorders.
Connectedness and Mental Health Cont.

**Why is Connectedness a Protective Factor?**
(1) Greater monitoring of behavior by others
(2) Encourages positive coping strategies
(3) Reduces overall stress levels
(4) Promotes positive appraisal of stressful situations
(5) Helps establish meaning and purpose

Suicide prevention programs are now placing greater emphasis on strategies to enhance individuals’ connectedness.
Connection Over Time
How have we connected?

Basic Communication Forms
- Spoken language, writing, drawing, music

Developments in Early-to-Mid 20th Century
- Radio, telephone, television, motion pictures

Technology Advancements of 1980s and 1990s
- Introduction of Internet, e-mail, websites, instant messaging, Google
- October 13, 1994: Netscape Navigator launched publicly

Connection Technology of Early 21st Century
- Mobile phones, text messaging, blogs, vlogs
- Wikipedia, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Skype, Twitter
Each generation is characterized by different experiences that shape their perspectives and behavior.

**Generation Z includes people born between the mid 1990s and 2010, characterized as ‘Digital Natives’**

### Generation Terminology by Birth Year

- **1945**
- **1950**
- **1955**
- **1960**
- **1965**
- **1970**
- **1975**
- **1980**
- **1985**
- **1990**
- **1995**
- **2000**
- **2005**
- **2010** ...
- **2025**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Baby Boomers</th>
<th>Generation X</th>
<th>Generation Y</th>
<th>Generation Z</th>
<th>Generation Alpha</th>
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<tr>
<td>Divided into ‘Hippies’ and ‘Yuppies’, they were raised by the ‘Builders’</td>
<td>Also known as ‘Latchkey Kids’, they were raised by the early Baby Boomers</td>
<td>Also known as the ‘Millennial Generation’, they were raised by the late Baby Boomers</td>
<td>Also known as ‘Digital Natives’, they are being raised by Generation X</td>
<td>Likely to be ‘Google Kids’</td>
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- **Baby Boomers**
  - Born post-World War II in an increasingly optimistic and financially stable world
  - Witnessed several important social changes – Women’s Movement, Civil Rights Movement, Vietnam Peace Movement, etc.
  - Increased prosperity led to growing consumerism
  - Characterized as idealistic and competitive

- **Generation X**
  - Born into a world witnessing a strong trend toward divorce and economic uncertainty
  - Observed the popularity of the disco and hip-hop culture, and technologies such as cable TV and video games
  - Characterized as individualists and skeptical of authority

- **Generation Y**
  - Born into a world marked by increasing inter-regional and inter-community conflicts
  - Witnessed emerging digital technologies like instant communication via email and text messaging (SMS)
  - Characterized as optimistic, tech-comfortable, style-conscious, and brand loyal

- **Generation Z**
  - Born into a world facing challenges such as terrorism and environmental concerns
  - Witnessed widespread use of electronic gadgets and digital technologies like the Internet and social networking sites
  - Characterized as tech-savvy, globally connected (in the virtual world), flexible and smarter, and tolerant of diverse cultures

- **Generation Alpha**
  - Born into a world newly emerging from widespread economic slowdown
  - Expected to be more tech-savvy, educated, and materialistic than previous generations
MLK and Connectedness
"If we are to have peace on earth... we must develop a world perspective.... Yes, as nations and individuals, we are interdependent.... It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. We are made to live together because of the interrelated structure of reality.... This is the way our universe is structured, this is its interrelated quality. We aren’t going to have peace on earth until we recognize this basic fact of the interrelated structure of all reality."

The Connection Profiles

Pintado identified five connection profiles after conducting research examining individuals’ connection behaviors and their use of connection technology.

Heavy emphasis is placed on connection through mobile devices, online programs, and social media.

Factors that Vary across the Profiles
(1) Attitudes toward connection technology
(2) Understanding of connection technology
(3) Use of connection technology
(4) Perception of connection
(5) Degree of connection
## Basic and Passive Connectors

### Basic Connectors
1. Have little desire to try new connection technology.
2. Prefer to minimize use of connection technology as much as possible.
3. Have a strong preference for face-to-face or voice call interactions.
4. Rely on a “technology translator” to assist them with interacting online.
5. Have a classical interpretation of connection.

### Passive Connectors
1. Use connection devices that are user-friendly and of personal interest.
2. Wait until connection devices are well established before using.
3. Rely on a “technology translator” to assist them with interacting online.
4. Very selective in choice of friends.
5. Have a conceptual interpretation of connection.
Selective and Active Connectors

**Selective Connectors**

1. Choose to apply connection technology to daily life.
2. Selective in choice of friends.
3. Open to new ideas, methods, and applications.
4. Use connection devices that fit their contexts and personal agendas.
5. Have a relational interpretation of connection.
6. Manage connections in an efficient and effective way.

**Active Connectors**

1. Use connection technology regularly, practically, and consistently.
2. Have a strong preference for initiating interactions.
3. Quick to adopt new connection technology.
4. Have a profound understanding of the effectiveness of connection technology.
5. Have a physical interpretation of connection.
Super Connectors

(1) Have an expert understanding of connection technology.
(2) The first to try out new connection devices.
(3) Manage connections in a planned, executable, and measurable fashion.
(4) Networking is crucial to how they run their social and business practices.
(5) Have a structural interpretation of connection.
GROUP ACTIVITY#1: EXPLORING THE CONNECTION PROFILES
Group Activity #1

Questions

Which connection profile best represents you? Why?

What strategies do you use to connect to the individuals and groups identified on your “My Connections” handout?

Share your responses with your group.
Break Time

Stay tuned for our book raffle!

Books Being Raffled

“Remembering Garrett”
Gordon H. Smith

“Connection Generation”
Iggy Pintado

Western Michigan University
GROUP ACTIVITY #2: BUILDING CONNECTIONS ON CAMPUS
Group Activity #2: Directions

(1) Complete the “Assessment of Campus Connectedness” handout.

(2) Identify current connection strategies and areas in need of improvement.

(3) Develop as a group a list of strategies to enhance connectedness to the campus and community.
Presenting the WMU Theatre for Community Health

Performance Title: “Tons of Things to Do”

Performers
Micah Hazel  Hannah Ball  Christopher Williams
Shanice Eaton  Noah King  Izzy Kelly
Chanelle Taylor  Shuyuan Wang  Perris Thomas
WMU CAMPUS-WIDE SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM UPDATES
Suicide Statistics

National Statistics (Based on 2009 data)

(1) Suicide is the 10th ranking cause of death in the U.S.
(2) Men are 4x more likely to die by suicide, women are 3x more likely to make a suicide attempt.
(3) An estimated 90% of individuals who die by suicide have a diagnosable psychological disorder.

Resources:

Suicide Statistics Continued

**College Student Statistics**

1. Suicide is the leading cause of death among college-age individuals (ages 18 to 24).
2. College students have a significantly lower suicide risk in comparison to their same-age peers who are not attending college.
3. Key suicide risk factors for college students include previous attempts and substance abuse.

**Students at Increased Risk for Suicide**

1. Commuter students and older students
2. International students
3. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students
WMU Campus-Wide Suicide Prevention Program

Program Beginnings
(1) Established in 2006
(2) Original funding came from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) under the Garret Lee Smith Memorial Act (2004).

Program Mission
Our program aims to accomplish the following within the university community:
1. Raise awareness and understanding of suicide
2. Help develop a caring and responsive campus community
3. Increase knowledge about suicide prevention resources
Campus-wide Suicide Prevention Activities

In-Person Training:
– students, faculty, staff and administrators

Mental Health and Prevention-Related Workshops:
- Campus and community workshops

Online Suicide Prevention Training:
– students, faculty, staff, and community members
Perceived and Actual Suicide Prevention Knowledge (N=1018) (Suicide Prevention Exposure, Awareness, Knowledge, and Stigma Scale [SPEAKS])

Students and faculty/staff reported more than average to a great deal of self-perceived knowledge about:

- suicide risk factors: 45%
- suicide facts: 29%
- how to ask someone about suicide: 25%
- ability to convince someone to seek help: 30%
- how to assist someone to get the help they need: 33%
- 29% were found to have a high level of actual knowledge of suicide facts
Perceived Stigma

64% reported that receiving treatment for suicidal thoughts and/or behaviors carry social stigma
46% reported that others might view a person less favorably who seeks treatment
18% reported that it is advisable to hide from others when seeking treatment
11% reported that treatment is a sign of personal weakness
26% reported that others will tend to like less those who receive treatment
Awareness of Resources

56% reported awareness of at least one hotline that they could refer someone to.
77% reported awareness of at least one resource to which they could refer someone to.
Key Regression Findings

Exposure to suicide prevention materials, participation in suicide prevention activities, and having someone close to you attempt or die by suicide predicted greater self-perceived suicide prevention knowledge.

Participation also predicted greater actual knowledge of suicide prevention facts.

Exposure to suicide prevention materials on campus also predicts a lower level of perceived stigma.
Implications

More education is needed to increase suicide prevention knowledge, self efficacy in assisting others who are at risk, and to reduce social stigma associated with seeking help!
How Can You Help?

You can help our program in the following ways:

(A) Take steps to reduce the stigma associated with suicide.
(B) Spread the word about our program’s services.
(C) Join us at our Wednesday meetings from 2:00 to 4:00pm.
(D) Keep us informed about new resources and emerging research.
(E) Complete our new online training website, and give us feedback.
(F) Help us lobby for more funding for our program.
(G) Develop support groups for suicide attempters and suicide survivors.
Special thanks

to our generous sponsors:

WMU MLK Committee
Division of Student Affairs
Office of Diversity and Inclusion

to our esteemed volunteers and undergraduate student employees:

Dr. Christine Iaderosa
Team members of WMU Theatre for Community Health
    Traci N. Burton
    Brandie R. Batten
    Ariel J. Arnold
    Todd L. Ray

and to other individuals who helped us develop this workshop.

Sincerely,
WMU Campus-Wide Suicide Prevention Program
Resources


Thank You for Joining Us!
Please take time to complete the workshop evaluation.

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